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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 MAPUTO 000609

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MZ](#)

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION LEADER SIMANGO READIES PRESIDENTIAL BID

REF: A. MAPUTO 490

[B](#). MAPUTO 408

[C](#). 08 MAPUTO 1291

Classified By: Pol/Econ Chief Matthew Roth, Reasons 1.4(b+d)

[1](#). (C) SUMMARY: Daviz Simango, leader of new opposition party Democratic Movement of Mozambique (MDM), is readying a public announcement to run for president in October 28 national elections. In a meeting with the Charge, he described the mechanics of how MDM is organizing its campaign, and discussed the party's financial situation. Simango observed that ruling party Frelimo and the GRM are creating obstacles to MDM's efforts, and have even resorted to using the national police for aggressive intimidation tactics against MDM. Simango continues to display competence and effectiveness in planning, which will likely bring him some success over the next five months. GRM obstructionism is not surprising, though the turn to police intimidation is worrisome. An extensive biography is attached, as related by Simango to the Charge. END SUMMARY.

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A Presidential Bid (Almost) Ready  
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[2](#). (U) Daviz Simango, leader of new opposition party Democratic Movement of Mozambique (MDM), announced for the first time publicly on May 20 in an interview with national newspaper O Pais that he was ready to run for president, saying that if the MDM delegates in an upcoming national convention called for it, he would put forward a candidacy for the October 28 presidential elections.

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MDM Campaign Mechanics  
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[3](#). (C) In a weekend one-on-one meeting at the Charge's residence, Simango said that MDM had formalized its registration as a political party, and that there would be a national party meeting of 120 delegates in Nampula on June 6. Simango observed that internal competition for the position of MDM party Secretary General had proved so acrimonious that he had unilaterally decided to not name anyone for the time being.

[4](#). (C) He said that MDM's financial situation is somewhat improved, as private sector and international donors were now supporting the campaign, as were Mozambicans in Germany. He noted that religious groups were also getting on the bandwagon, especially Catholics and Muslims, pointing to Frelimo's historically anti-religious stance still engendering resentment (Note: some observers claim that Catholic Bishop of Beira Jaime Goncalves is surreptitiously advising Simango. End note.). Simango said that he was having success in working with traditional tribal leaders in rural areas (known as 'regulos')--Simango himself being the

great grandson of a regulo. By equipping them with motorcycles, mobile telephones, and a small stipend, these regulos were campaigning on MDM's behalf in areas party organizers were unable to reach. Simango said that MDM was focused on energizing voters now, urging people to register to vote in June, since they need to register then to vote in October. The Charge reiterated that the USG would not support specific parties, but would make every effort to press for a fair democratic process that would allow competition for all parties.

15. (C) Simango indicated that intimidation by police at MDM events was increasing, noting that his staff videotaped one incident of police violence at a rally and sent it to every TV broadcaster in the country--it was never aired. He predicted one tactic that the GRM will use to hurt his party is that the public campaign funds the GRM gives to presidential candidates won't be released until late in the electoral process, as opposed to earlier when the funds are truly needed.

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MDM Plans: A View from Beira  
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16. (C) In a separate meeting in his Mayoral office in Beira, Simango reiterated to P/E chief concerns about his personal security. He said that the GRM had assigned two bodyguards to protect him, but they seemed to be actively hindering instead of improving the situation. He indicated that MDM desperately needed to train a few of its own trusted staff in this area. Simango added that every time he attempted to

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leave Beira to campaign, the national police would halt his exit at the city limits. Sometimes he would be able to talk his way through the roadblock but was not always successful. Simango shared photos from his recent attempt to leave Beira in which police trained automatic weapons directly on him.

17. (C) Nonetheless, Simango said his campaign plans were moving apace. He said MDM had purchased more motorcycles--one for each of the 120 national delegates, and that the party had ordered 500 bicycles for youth organizers on university campuses. He also indicated that his most immediate campaign goal was to gain complete political control of Sofala province (Note: this may not be difficult--subsequent P/E chief meetings with provincial Renamo and Frelimo directors suggested sheer incompetence. End note.). Simango said MDM would then focus on making inroads to Zambezia and Nampula provinces, which contain 40 percent of the country's population.

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COMMENT: Good Gameplan Facing State Intimidation  
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18. (C) Simango continues to show that he understands how to run an effective national campaign. This level of efficiency will no doubt garner him national presence over the next few months--and perhaps even a respectable number of votes in October. His plan to hold a national convention in Nampula (the country's most populous province) is especially smart, since it could generate interest with an important segment of the population. While it is to be expected that the Frelimo-controlled government would use all resources at its disposal to win the election and to create obstacles for MDM and Simango, aggressive police intimidation is a dark and worrisome twist that suggests the Guebuza administration is increasingly unwilling to allow anything more than a token space for political competitors to operate. It is also worth noting that even though the Charge and Emboffs regularly engage with representatives from all political parties, meetings with MDM have generated intense GRM interest, including what appears to be surveillance. Simango and MDM are still making the Frelimo machine nervous.

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Bio: Orphaned Son of a Martyred Independence Fighter  
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¶9. (C) Simango recounted to the Charge a wide-ranging history of his life. His great grandfather was a traditional rural tribal leader--a 'regulo.' His grandfather was an evangelist and refused to take on the hereditary regulo role. He was deported by the colonial Portuguese administration to Sao Tome and Principe for leading an uprising against the Portuguese in the 1930s. Simango's father, Uria Simango, was a Church of Christ pastor. His mother had moved to Zimbabwe to pursue an education (denied to African women in Mozambique by the Portuguese), where she met Simango's father during a visit. After his parents married and settled in Zimbabwe, Simango's brother Lutero was born there.

¶10. (C) Simango's father met Eduardo Mondlane (later the leader of Frelimo) in a Maputo church in the early 1960s, and recruited Mondlane to join UNAMO--a precursor to what would become Frelimo. Simango's parents and older brother moved to Dar es Salaam as the fight against the Portuguese began to heat up, where Daviz was born. Simango's father had become a Vice-President of Frelimo by this time, but was forced out of the party in 1969 due to ideological differences with Mondlane, Samora Machel and others. The family moved to Egypt, where they stayed until 1974. After a short stay in Nairobi, the family returned to Mozambique after independence in 1975, where Simango's younger brother was born in Beira. Simango's father founded the PCN party at this time, believing that there would be an opportunity for multi-party democracy in the wake of independence. He soon learned that Frelimo agents were intending to kill him and fled to Malawi, where he was captured and sent to a 're-education' camp in Niassa. Soon after, Frelimo agents captured Simango's aunt in Beira, thinking she was Simango's mother. Daviz Simango, who had been with his aunt, escaped only by jumping over the wall behind the house. Simango's mother quickly turned herself in, in exchange for her sister's release.

¶11. (C) Simango said that he never saw his parents again, and that both were secretly executed at the camp in Niassa.

(Note: Current president Armando Guebuza was Minister of Interior at the time of the executions. End note). Simango began studying at a school in the nearby town of Buzi for two

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years until Frelimo had him kicked out. Simango then went to Maputo, where he began studying chemical engineering, then later switched to civil engineering. After graduation, he worked in Maputo for CETA construction, a company in which he is still a shareholder. Simango is married to a teacher who is studying for her law degree. They have two children--14 and 5 year old boys.  
Chapman